Darkness and Dawn

By George Allan England

After a lapse of hundreds of years Allen Stern, a consulting engineer, and his stenographer. Beatrice Kendrick, awake from an unprecedented sleep in what is left of Stern's former office in the tower of the Metropolitan Building. Everything beneath them has gone to ruin and decay. The old city of New York is now a forest, and they are apparently the sply two allive in the world. They produce skins to cover their nakedness and food from glass jars which have with stood the ravages, of time.

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In a few days Stern discovers a primitive implement of war and a freshly gnawed human bone, showing that the world is inhabited by others. In desperation he efficavors to establish a system of mignale from the tower, seeking to communicate with other members of his ewn race.

CHAPTER XIX. The Unknown Race.

N ALMOST irresistible repugnance, a compelling aversion, more of the spirit than of the more of the spirit than of the fiesh, instantly selzed the man at sight of even the few members of the horde which lay within his view. Though he had been expecting to see something disgusting, something grotesque and horrible, his mind was wholly unprepared for the real hideousness of these creatures, now seen by the ever-strengthening light of day. And slowly, as he stared, the knowledge dawned on him that there was a monstrous problem to face, far greater and more urgent than he had foreseen; here were factors not yet understood; here, the product of forces till then not even dreamed of by his scientific mind. "I-I certainly did expect to find a small race," thought he. "Small and possibly" misshapen, the descendants, maybe, of a few survivors of the cataclysm. But this!——"

And again, fascinated by the ghastly spectacle, he laid his eye to the chink in the wall and looked.

A tenuous fog still drifted slowly among the forest trees, veiling the deeper recess. Yet, near at hand, within the limited segment of vision which the engineer commanded, everything could be made out with reasonable distinctness.

Some of the things (for so he mentally fiesh, instantly seized the man

ness.

Some of the things (for so he mentally named them, knowing no better term) were squatting, lying or moving about, quite close at hand. The fire by the spring had now almost died down. It was evident that the revel had ceased was evident that the revel had ceased and that the horde was settling down to rest—glutted, no doubt, with the raw and bleeding flesh of the conquered foe. Stern could easily have poked his revolver muzzle through the crack in the wall and shot down many of them. For an instant the temptation lay strong upon him to get rid of at least a dozen or a score; but prudence restrained his hand.

No use!" he told himself. "Nothing "No use!" he told himself. "Nothing to be gained by that. But once I get my proper chance at them—"

And again, striving to observe them with the cool and calculating eye of science, he studied the shifting, confused picture out there before him.

Then he realized that the feature which, above all else, struck him as ghastly and unnatural was the color of the things.

which, above all else, struck him as ghastly and unnatural was the color of the things.

"Not black, not even brown," said he.
"I thought so last night, but daylight corrects the impression, Not red, either, or copper-colored. What color, then? For heaven's sake, what?"

He could hardly name it. Through the fog it struck him as a dull slate-gray, almost a blue. He recalled that once he had seen a child's modeling clay, much used and very dirty, of the same shade, which certainly had no designation in the chromatic scale. Some of the things were darker, some a triffe lighter—these, no doubt, the younger ones—but they all partook of this same characteristic tint. And the skin, moreover, looked duil and sickly, rather mottled and whelly repulsive, very like that of a Mexican dog.

a Mexican dog.

Like that dog's hide, too, it was aparsely overgrown with whitish bristles. Here or there, on the bodies of some of the larger things, bulbous warts had formed, somewhat like those on a toad's back; and on these warts the bristles clustered thickly. Stern saw the hair, on the neck of one of these creatures, crawl and rise like a jackal's, as a neighbor jostled him; and from the thing's throat issued a clicking grunt of purely animal resentment.

"Merciful heavens! What are they?" wondered Stern, again, utterly hadded Here or there, on the bodies of some

wondered Stern, again, utterly baffled for any explanation. "What can they Another, in the group close by, attracted his attention. It was lying on its side, asleep maybe, its back directly toward the engineer. Stern clearly saw the narrow shoulders and the thin long arms, covered with that white bristling

Arms. covered with that white bristling hair.

One sprawling, spatulate, clawlike hand lay on the forest moss. The twisted little apelike legs, disproportionately short, were curied up; the feet, prohensible and with a well-marked thumb on each, twicthed a little now and then. The head, enormously too big for the body, to which it was joined by a thin neck, seemed to be scantily covered with a fine, curling down of a dirty yellowish drab color.

lowish drab color.
"What a target!" thought the engineer. "At this distance, with my .28, I could drill it without half trying!" All at once, another of the group sat up, shoved away a burned-out torch, and yawned with a noisy, doglike whine. Stern got a quick yet definite glimpse of the sharp canine teeth; he saw that the thing's fieshless lips and retreating chin were caked with dried blood. The tongue he saw was long and lithe and apparently rasped.

Then the creature stood up, balancing on its absurd bandy legs, a spear in its hand—a fiint-pointed spear of crude workmanship. At full sight of the face, Stern shrank

for a moment. "T've known savages, as such," thought he. "I understand them. I know animals. They're animals, that's all. But this creature-merciful heaven! And at the realization that it wan neither heast nor man, the engineer's blood chilled within his veins. Yet he forced himself still to look

Yet he forced himself still to look and to observe, unseen. There was practically no forehead at all. The nose was but a formless lump of cartilage, the ears large and pendulous and hair; Under heavy brow-ridges, the dull, lack-luster eyes blinked stupidly, bloodshot and cruel. As the mouth closed, Stern noted how the under incisors closed up over the upper lip, showing a gleam of dull yellowish tvory; a slaver dripped from the doglike corner of the mouth. Stern shivered, and drew back. He realized now that he was in the presence of an unknown semi-human

He realized now that he was in the presence of an unknown semi-human type, different in all probability from any that had ever yet existed. It was less their bestiality that disgusted him, than their utter, hopeless, age-long degeneration from the man-standard.

What race had they descended from? He could not tell. He thought he could detect a trace of the Mongol in the region of the eye, in the cheek-bones, and the general contour of what, by courtesy, might be called the face. There were indications, also, of the negroid type, still stronger. But the color—whence could that have come? And the general characteristics, were And the general characteristics, were not these distinctly simian? Again he looked. And now one of the pot-bellied little horrors, shambling and

pot-bellied little horrors, shambling and bulbous-kneed, was scratching its warty, blue hide with its black claws as it trailed along through the forest. It looked up, grinning and jabbering; Stern saw the teeth that should have been molars. With repulsion he neted that they were not flat-crowned, but sharp, like a dog's. Through the blue lips they clearly showed.

"Nothing herbivorous here," thought the scientist. "All flesh-food of—who knows what sort!"

knows what sort!" knows what sort!"

Quickly his mind ran over the outlines of the problem. He knew at once
that these things were lower than any
human race ever recorded, far below

A slight sound, there behind him in the room, set his heart flalling madly. His hand frome to the butt of the auto-

matic as he drew back from the cleft in the wall, and, staring, whirled about, leady to shoot on the second.

Then he started back. His jaw dropped, his eyes widened and limply fell his arm. The revolver swung loosely at his side. his arm. The revolver swung loosely at his side.
"You?"—he soundlessly breathed.
You—here?" You—hare?"
There at the door of the great empty room, magnificent in her tiger-skin, the Kragg gripped in her supple hand, stood Beatrice.

Continuation of This Story Will Be Found In Tomorrow's Issue of The Times.

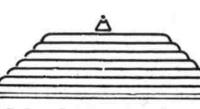


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ST. N. W., 129-Large front room, 2d floor; C ST. N. W., 216-Large bright front rooms well furnished; also two good sized hall rooms; reasonable. PA. AV. N. W., 1208—Beautiful sunny, mod.; rates to permanent; opp Raleigh Hotel. INDIANA AVE. N. W., 214—Beautiful large and small rooms; central location; rea-sonable.

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